

Existing law establishes within the Dept. of Health and Hospitals the La. State Child Death Review Panel. Existing law further provides for the protection of the health and welfare of the children of the state by requiring multidisciplinary and multiagency reviews of all deaths of children under the age of nine and compilation of the data gathered from these reviews by the panel.

Existing law requires the panel to establish a standardized child death investigation protocol which includes procedures for all law enforcement agencies and local social service agencies to follow; establish criteria for information to be included in a death investigation report; collect, review, and analyze all pertinent information on child deaths in order to report to the legislature; and recommend changes which may prevent child deaths. Members of the panel include:

- (1) The state health officer or his designee.
- (2) The secretary of the Dept. of Health and Hospitals or his designee.
- (3) The secretary of the Dept. of Social Services or his designee.
- (4) The superintendent of state police or his designee.
- (5) The state registrar of vital records or his designee.
- (6) The attorney general or his designee.
- (7) Three persons appointed by the governor who shall include a health professional with expertise in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome appointed from a list of names submitted by the La. State Medical Society, a pediatrician with experience in diagnosing and treating child abuse appointed from a list of names submitted by the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and a citizen from the state at large.
- (8) A licensed forensic pathologist serving as a coroner in the state appointed by the president of the La. Coroner's Association.

New law retains the membership enumerated in Nos. (1)-(7) above, but provides that the coroner member shall be appointed by the president of the La. Coroner's Association and deletes requirement that this coroner be a licensed forensic pathologist.

New law provides for an additional member of the panel, a forensic pathologist certified by the American Board of Pathology and licensed to practice medicine the state of La. appointed by the chairman of the panel and subject to Senate confirmation.

Effective upon signature of governor (July 9, 1999).

(Amends R.S. 40:2019(C)(8); Adds R.S. 40:2019(C)(9))